

Essential Tremor the new guidelines of the American Academy of Neurology.

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Essential Tremor is a common neurological disorder.

It is caused by a poorly understood disturbance of brain dysfunction. People with essential tremor experience shaking they cannot control.

Essential tremor can affect:

The limbs, causing tremor in the hands and arms. ,
The head. ,The vocal cords, making the voice sounds shaky.

Essential tremor occurs when the muscles are used. Unlike Parkinson tremor, essential tremor is usually not present when the limbs are relaxed. Tremor often begins in early adulthood. It may become more obvious as people get older. Since tremor occurs during movement _ such as during eating or writing _ people may find it bothersome and embarrassing.

Treatments for Essential tremor:

There is no cure for essential tremor, but there are treatments that give relief and improve quality of life. These include drug therapies and surgical procedures. The treatment chosen will depend on severity of tremor and the side effects of each treatment.

Drug Therapy:

If tremor interferes with the daily work or other daily activities, drugs may help. Neurologists looked at data for several drugs. Many people with tremor benefit from drug therapy.

A decision to use drugs will depend on other medical conditions the patient has and potential side effects. The doctor should discuss any side serious side effect with his patient.

Limb Tremor:

If the patient has tremor in his hands and arms, there is strong evidence supporting the use of propranolol, primidone or long acting propranolol. These drugs should be offered to people with hand and arm tremor. If taking one of these alone does not sufficiently reduce tremor, the doctor will monitor how well these drugs are working; dosage may need to be adjusted.

There is also good evidence that the following medications are probably effective and may be of help. They should be considered when propranolol and primidone are not adequate on the patients' general condition and the risk for complications compared to potential successful outcomes.

Deep brain stimulation (DBS)

In deep brain stimulation, an electric probe is placed in the thalamus.

A wire from the electrode is routed beneath the skin to a pace maker device implanted near the collar bone. The pacemaker and electrode stimulate the thalamus with pulses of electricity. This blocks the brain activity that causes tremor. Only special centers perform this procedure.

Evidence shows that DBS is effective and may be used to treat people with limb tremor of treatment difficulty but there is not enough data to make recommendations for the use of DBS to treat head or voice tremor. DBS has fewer side effects than thalamotomy.

Thalamotomy :

During this surgery, a lesion is placed on a small part of the thalamus. This interferes with abnormal brain activity that causes the tremor. This is typically done on only one side of the brain. Evidence shows that thalamotomy on one side of the brain may be effective and used to treat a limb tremor that cannot be controlled by medication. Thalamotomy on both sides of the brain is not recommended because of high risk of disabling side effects.

It is best to recommend an individualized treatment plan, including lifestyle changes that may reduce tremor. A treatment decision will depend on other medical conditions the patient has and the potential side effects.

The doctor should discuss serious, if any. All treatments have some side effects; the choice of which side effects can be tolerated on the individual.

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